

# Two boys: different or the same?

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Two Boys: Different or the Same? The protagonists of "The Story of the Good Little Boy" by Mark Twain and "Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes are similar and different in many ways. In "The Story of the Good Little Boy" by Mark Twain, the protagonist is Jacob Blivens. He was a good boy who "always obeyed his parents" and "always learned his book, and never was late at Sabbath-school" ("The Story of the Good Little Boy", 473). It was his goal to end up in a Sunday-school book like all the other little boys he had read about. Jacob went around trying to do good deeds, but every good deed he did backfired on him. He ended up dying in the end. In "Thank You, M'am" by Langston Hughes, Roger is the protagonist. He is a young boy who tries to steal Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones' purse at eleven o'clock at night. He gets caught by the woman, dragged to her home, and taken care of. Mrs. Luella gives Roger the money that he was trying to steal to buy blue suede shoes and they never saw each other again. Jacob Blivens from "The Story of the Good Little Boy" is similar to Roger from "Thank You, M'am" in that they are both young boys who aren't really using their brains to their full capacities. Jacob is under the impression that he can make it into a Sunday-school book just by being a good boy and doing good deeds, but he failed to read the entire book about the good little boys. "Whenever he read about a particularly good one he turned over quickly to the end to see what became of him..." ("The Story of the Good Little Boy", 474)" Jacob doesn't know what happened to the characters in between the beginning and the end. Also, he didn't use common sense to realize that all of his good deeds were just getting him into more trouble. He ended up in worse condition than all of the bad boys when he tried to help. Roger was lacking

common sense too; he undermined the weight of the Mrs. Luella's bag, despite the bag being very large, and nearly got himself in serious trouble. Also, both boys had selfish motives. Jacob was trying to get himself into a Sunday-school book and Roger was trying to steal money to buy himself blue suede shoes. Both protagonists are similar in that they are both young boys who don't use common sense and have selfish motives. Just as they have commonalities, they also have many differences. Jacob consistently went out time after time to try and do good deeds even though he always ended up hurt. He got hit by a blind man, he was nearly mauled by a dog, and he nearly drowned when trying to warn the bad boys about drowning ("The Story of the Good Little Boy", 475). As for Roger, it is implied that he learned his lesson after getting caught by Mrs. Luella. He actually had an adult sit down with him and teach him something since, unlike Jacob, he had no one at home ("Thank You, M'am", 5). In the end, Jacob Blivens ended up being scattered "among four townships" ("The Story of the Good Little Boy", 476) and Roger ended up alive and with money to buy himself shoes. It only took one instance for Roger to learn his lesson, but for Jacob, time and time again, incident after incident, he withstood the consequences of his naivety and ended up dead. The boys clearly took some differences on their approach and their outcomes. Among the differences between the two stories, the subject of tone can be included; Twain and Hughes both took a different approach towards the tones of their stories. In "The Story of the Good Little Boy," Twain takes on a sarcastic tone in describing the events that happened in Jacob Bliven's life. "...In his case there was a screw loose somewhere, and it all happened just the other way." ("The Story of the

Good Little Boy", 475) Nothing went as it was supposed to in Jacob's life. The bad boys did what they wanted without persecution, but when Jacob did as he was told and taught, he ended up hurt or in trouble. In "Thank You, M'am," Hughes uses a positive and uplifting tone. It is clear that Roger is a lost young boy who basically has to fend for himself since he has no one at home. Hughes uses his positive tone to take the reader on a journey through an event in Roger's life that ultimately changed him. "The boy wanted to say something else other than, "Thank you, M'am," to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones..." ("Thank you, M'am", 5) He was so grateful that he was at a loss for words to the woman who had done him a great kindness. Roger ended off being taken care of, fed, and given money to, which I'm sure is not how he had expected his day to end when he was preparing to steal Mrs. Luella's purse as she was walking down the street. Twain used his sarcastic tone to end of "The Story of the Good Little Boy" with Jacob Blivens' death whereas Hughes used a positive tone to lead to the closing of a significant event in Roger's life. In conclusion, both Twain and Hughes had protagonists that were similar and different. There was Jacob Blivens, who only desired to do "good," and Roger, who desired to gain ten dollars through the act of robbery. Both authors also had different approaches to conveying basically the same point. Twain used a sarcastic tone and Hughes use an optimistic tone to show that events don't always turn out the way that society expects them to. Sometimes outcomes differ from the norm and it is important to realize the possibility of that, instead of being naïve about the world and expecting things to always go as plan. Sometimes things can turn out for the better, as they did for Roger, or they can end gravely, as they did for Jacob

Blivens. You never really know what to expect out of life; you can only hope for the best.